



# THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE

NEW YORK, NY 10021

December 31, 1980

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

Dr. Earl W. Daive  
Department of Biochemistry  
University of Washington  
Seattle, Washington 98195

Dear Dr. Daive:

This is to respond (alas belatedly) to your letter of September 19th asking for an appraisal of Dr. Richard Novick for the position of Chairman of the Department of Microbiology at your University.

I apologize that this file was mislaid until the year-end clean up just now and I hope that my comments can still be useful to you.

Dr. Novick has a well deserved recommendation as a brilliant investigator and there is no question that he would be sought after for a professorship at any major university that was building a program in his field of interest. He has been one of the, if not the, leading investigators in the investigation of the biology and molecular genetics of plasmids for many years, and has published a stream of exciting work since his first entry into this area.

I am less able to evaluate his capabilities on the administrative side for functioning as a chairman of a department. The most important attribute, a good critical sense of the quality of scientific work and of specific investigators, he has in very large measure. I simply do not know whether his previous experience has given the opportunity to develop and demonstrate the qualities of service to others at the expense of one's own ego that are an equally important attribute, together with the more mundane matters of handling academic administration from which he may have been sheltered in his present role. His more immediate associates at the Public Health Research Institute would be able to provide more telling evidence than I can offer. Please do not inter-

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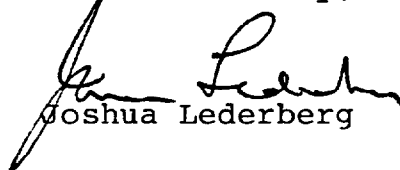
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pret my inability to comment on this aspect of the appointment as being in any way pejorative: they simply reflect my lack of knowledge about him in that character.

On the other hand I hope that you are looking out for these considerations, as well as the preeminent one of scientific excellence, in your recruiting of a candidate for a role that must combine laboratory science with the management of departmental affairs.

He is a lucid writer and speaker and I would have every reason to believe would be an excellent teacher. He is also an exciting person to relate to from an intellectual standpoint and in that respect should be a lustrous addition to your faculty.

Yours sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg